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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: promoting full employment and decent work for all

Statement submitted by 8th Day Center for Justice and VIVAT International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 2006.

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Statement

1. Extreme poverty is still a stark reality that hundreds of millions of people live. Our experience tells that one of the main causes of extreme poverty is the lack of decent work. The theme: "Promoting full employment and decent work for all" is both timely and relevant. Providing decent work for all is one of the keys to eradicating extreme poverty.

2. This is affirmed by the report of the Secretary General submitted to the Sixtieth session of the General Assembly "The Centrality of Employment to Poverty Eradication" which said in its recommendation, "Arguably, the best anti-poverty programme is employment and the best route to socio-economic development and personal wellbeing is through decent work". (A/60/314 para 67)

3. The target of decent work for all has been integrated into Millennium Development Goal 1: "to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of our relevant national and international policies and our national development strategies". Although there has been some progress made in creating job opportunities, there is a lot left to be implemented. The United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, asked in his report, "If history judges 2005 for its promises, then 2006 must be judged on implementation. Are we on course to look back, in 2015, and say that no effort was spared?" (A/61/1 para 27)

4. We are concerned especially about the plight of the extremely poor: indigenous peoples, women, youth, urban poor, persons living with HIV/AIDS and refugees.

- Decent work for the extremely poor is scarce where they live.
- The extremely poor enjoy very few social protections.
- The extremely poor cannot afford basic education nor are given adequate skills training to qualify for decent work.
- The extremely poor not only lack access to the necessary social, cultural and political networks that empower them to free themselves from the shackles of poverty but the system deprives them of opportunities for economic development.

5. Our experience shows providing decent work to the extremely poor is not only necessary; it can be done. VIVAT has focused on people-centered development by empowerment and capacity building programs, especially for indigenous peoples, women, youth, persons living with HIV/AIDS and urban poor. Job opportunities were created through micro-credit/finance and other self-help projects, and established centers for education and skills training for the socially disadvantaged. 8th Day Center for Justice works with several coalitions on issues that promote full employment and human rights standards.

6. Good Practices:

1. Center for Middle Education for Adults (CEMA): Batallas near the shores of Lake Titicaca, Bolivia, VIVAT members are responsible for the administration of two educational centers,

Center for Middle Education for Adults (CEMA) and Bolivian Institute of Learning (IBA) which are types of Alternative Education. CEMA offers Primary Education of Adults (EPA) beginning with basics in reading and writing to finishing with a certificate of Secondary Education for Adults (ESA). IBA offers Technical Education for Adults (ETA) in commercial and manual technical arts, giving the students the opportunity to be certified as Qualified Operator to Auxiliary Technicians. Courses offered are Basics in Computers, Secretarial, Typing, Accounting, Poultry Raising, Macramé, Hand and Machine Weaving, Painting on Cloth, Hair Styling, Cosmetology, and Web Page Design. They receive certification in one or two years depending on the course. Formation/education of women is prioritized. The center is located where they live. This work is carried out in the indigenous communities that belong to Batallas (Kanapata, Igachi, Catacora, Huancane, Karwiz, Suriquina, Puerto Perez, Carcoma Distrito Laja).

2. 8th Day center for Justice works with coalitions over issues, which include ICCR (Inter-faith Center for Corporate Responsibility) over fair codes and ethics of corporations in regards to women and minority groups in the workforce. Other coalitions we work with are: Jobs with Justice (employment issues) and Chicago Fair Trade (works to increase fair trade in the Chicago metro area through education and advocacy); and Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign (committed to unite people living in poverty across color lines in order to abolish poverty).

7. In the Millennium Declaration of 2000 (General Assembly resolution 55/2), world leaders committed themselves "to spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty". **We recommend the following to end extreme poverty.**

1. **Prioritize and incorporate education for the underprivileged and marginalized in all relevant international policies and national development strategies.**
2. **Condone external debt, especially for LDCs. This will give them enough fiscal space to meet the social needs of their citizens.**
3. **VIVAT continues to appeal to Governments of developing countries, and especially the LDCs, to make decent work for all a clear objective of policymaking as the ILO urged and guarantee social protection for the poor.**
4. **End armed conflict especially in Africa as it only exacerbates the problems of extreme poverty.**
5. **Make health and access to affordable medicines a priority in national development strategies.**
6. **Support self-help projects, micro-credit/finance and cooperatives, especially for women.**
7. **Support technical skills training and capacity building programs to empower the poor, women, disabled and indigenous peoples.**